



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

SCOTCH SPORT AND HIGHLAND PROSPERITY.

By AUGUSTUS GRIMBLE.

FINDING myself in June last near Duncansby Head, and having spare time, I resolved on making a journey round the north coast of Scotland and visiting a country which was new to me. During my trip I stayed at the hotels of Lairg, Overseaig, Altnaharra, Forsinard, Melvich, Bettyhill, Tongue, Durness, Riconich, Scourie, Loch Inver, Inchnadamph, and Altnagalagach. All of them are fairly comfortable, and attention and civility reign supreme. The breakfasts would be nicer if good Wiltshire or Irish bacon were put on the table instead of hard, gristly, uneatable lumps of pig, libellously called ham, which appear daily only to be removed untouched. Likewise, the dinners would be better with a less ambitious *menu*—plain roast and boiled of the best is all one wants or expects, and the *vol au vent* of a Highland cook quite fails to recall reminiscences of the club *chef*, or even of the ‘Cecil’ or the ‘Savoy.’ However, I did not take up my pen to write about eating, and my readers must pardon the digression. The libel on my old friend Mr Ham led me to run riot.

From the outset of my trip I began to be impressed with the large sums of money that were brought to these parts by the humble brown trout. Each of the above-mentioned hotels have lochs more or less large and numerous lying within a few miles of them, on which they have the right of fishing. The hotels of Lairg—Altnaharra, Forsinard, Melvich, Riconich, Loch Inver, and Inchnadamph—have also salmon-fishings; all, however, were crowded to the attics with anglers, and on the average each of these hotels lodged at the very least ten anglers a day from the middle of May to the middle of September.

At the lowest estimate it will cost each one sixteen shillings a day for his hotel bill. There will be a further charge of three shillings and sixpence a day for the gillie, and one shilling and ninepence more for the man’s lunch. The wage is right, the lunch charge too high. To this there

is also usually a further item of three shillings a day as a share of the hire of the machine conveying anglers to and from the nearest points of the various lochs; and so we come to a minimum expenditure of twenty-five shillings a day for each trout-fisher. I have dealt with anglers only; but it may be mentioned that many of them bring their wives and families, and thus add considerably to the takings of the hotels. The thirteen hotels, each with its ten anglers at twenty-five shillings a day, will show a daily return of £162, 10s.; and, as this lasts for fully one hundred days, there is a sum of no less than £16,250 spent in the county of Sutherland alone solely for the privilege of catching brown trout, which at the best average three to the pound. And when it is a matter of a basket of trout, hotel weighing is always flattering.

In addition to these trout-fishing centres, there are also hotels at Inveran, Brora, and Helmsdale much affected by salmon-anglers. Now, it is quite easy to count up sixty-five other hotels in Scotland which are chiefly maintained by the army of trouters, who farther south are in evidence in even larger numbers than in Sutherland, for the hotels of the south are not only more accessible, but are also capable of putting up many more. In order, however, to be well within the mark, we will take it that each thirteen of these sixty-five hotels give the same return as that made by the thirteen of Sutherland, and then we have a further sum of £81,250, and a grand total of £97,500. To this must be added the moneys spent at the many smaller inns which only put up a few anglers, and thus we arrive at a sum of quite £120,000 disbursed each year in the hotels of the Highlands, not by tourists, but by anglers who would not come at all if there was no angling. A large proportion of the earnings of each hotel is distributed in its immediate neighbourhood in the shape of servants’ wages, in the purchase of horse-keep, provisions, farm and dairy produce, &c.

It is, therefore, clear that without the presence of the humble brown trout the Highland hotels and the Highland population would fare but poorly during the months of June, July, and August. To maintain and even increase this prosperity should be the object of both hotel-owners and hotel-renters; and to that end it is absolutely essential that the trouting should not be allowed to deteriorate. The incessant and skilful fishing carried on during each trouting season must eventually reduce their numbers and ultimately result in a falling off of quantity and quality unless artificial means are used to make good the over-fishing of each season. Already the *ferox* has become well-nigh extinct where it once was plentiful. The weights have dwindled down to small specimens of from three to six pounds, and it is rare now to hear of them as weighing from ten to thirty pounds. The old stagers have been caught; the younger ones will never have time given them to grow big; and unless the proprietors of lochs holding *ferox* close them periodically, in ten years hence the *ferox* will be as rare in the Sutherland lochs as the osprey.

I remember in the spring of 1858 staying at Ederline, at the south end of Loch Awe. At that period my friend and I were the only fishers out of the few that then fished the loch who devoted whole days to trolling for *ferox*—more often than not with no result; although during my visit my host was rewarded by one of twenty-nine and a half pounds and I with another of twelve pounds. In those times it was quite a matter of course for two rods in a few hours on a favourable day to take into their boat from five to eight dozen herring-sized trout. But now, alas! two rods do not make a score like that once in a season, over-fishing, pike, and steamboats having all contributed to make this splendid loch comparatively poor. I am not able to say if *ferox* are bred at any of the hatcheries. I think not, and beg to throw out the suggestion that the breeding establishments would be doing a good stroke of business for themselves, and at the same time be keeping the race of *ferox* in existence, if they turned their attention that way. Some of the hotel-keepers—the earliest of them, I think, was Mr Morrison of the Melvich Hotel—have already been wise enough to resort to artificial stocking, and by the introduction of Lochleven trout, purchased from Howietoun or other large breeding establishments, are doing their best to make the supply meet the demand. The greater number are, however, content to make hay while the sun shines, and leave matters to take their chance; in their own interests the owners of the hotels ought to bind the hotel-keepers to place a certain amount of fresh stock in the lochs each season. It would be a good plan if the owners or renters of hotels not very far apart combined together and started a hatchery amongst themselves, for up to certain distances the fry are easily transported from place

to place. At other hotels, so numerous are the lochs over which they have fishing rights (one landlord told me he had upwards of eighty!) that a certain number might be closed every year and fished only in alternate seasons, or even in every third one.

To form an approximate estimate of the sums disbursed by the renters of salmon-fishings is a more difficult matter; but, leaving out the money paid for salmon-fishing included in a shooting-rent, the money paid for salmon-fishing, together with the incidental expenses incurred, may be put down at another £80,000, not one penny of which would Scotland see if there were no salmon-fishing. I have arrived at this sum in a roundabout sort of way, but believe it is under the mark. Thus, when I first began to fish on my own account in the early sixties, I could rent a month on a fairly good stretch of water for from forty to sixty pounds, the services of a gillie being usually included in the rent. For that outlay I used to average as nearly as possible a fish for every sovereign; my worst month, which cost forty-five pounds, was sixteen fish; my best eighty-eight, for thirty-five pounds, and both of them were on the Dee. About 1867 the rents began to rise and fish were costing me quite fifty shillings each, which speedily went to five pounds a head; until, from 1870 up to the present, angling rents have increased by leaps and bounds, forcing me to retire—for as anglers became more plentiful good angling became scarcer; and nowadays it may be reckoned that fish cost the catcher quite ten pounds each.

To revert to Sutherland, in which county there are the Borgie, Brora, Dionard, Halladale, Helmsdale, Hope, Inchard, Inver, Kirkraig, Laxford, Naver, and Shin—twelve good rivers in all, the whols of which, with the exception of the Shin, are owned from source to mouth by the Duke of Sutherland, who, inasmuch as he also possesses all the coast netting-rights, is doubly monarch of all he surveys.

Let us look at the rentals of these rivers in the order in which they are printed. The angling rent of the Borgie is included in the rental of the shootings, but may fairly be valued at £100.

The Brora angling is also let with the shootings of Gordon Bush and Balnakoil; and if both tenants cared to let the spring fishing from the 11th of February to the end of May they would get upwards of £600 for it.

The Dionard is a late river, in which clean fish are seldom seen until after the first flood at the end of June. There are the Durness and Gualen beats; and if both were let from 1st July to 30th September, they would bring in from £150 to £200.

The Halladale, which opens on 11th January, is totally dependent on rain. It is divided into six beats, one to each of the hotels at Forsinard

and Melvich, one to Mr Pilkington of Sandside, one to the tenant of the Bighouse shootings, and two go to Mr Fox, who has had the For-sinard shootings for many years. The beats are fished in rotation, No. 6 being nearest the sea; the two upper ones are not of much account, and the probable value of the angling is about £200.

The Helmsdale is let with the six shooting-lodges on its banks. It is one of the best and earliest of the Scotch rivers; it opens on the 11th of January, and if a rod is let for the early fishing from £80 to £100 is usually paid from the opening to the end of February, which, according to the weather, is either very cheap or very dear—more often than not it is the latter; but if by chance the weather be mild and open, then very fine sport is nearly a certainty. If a rod is let later, then up till the end of May from £100 to £120 a month is asked and readily paid. Therefore, if all the six tenants chose to let their angling, they would get for division between them about £2300.

The angling of the Hope goes with the shooting of the same name. It is a late river, not worth a cast till July. From Loch Hope to the sea there are seven good pools, which go with Hope Lodge, which also has a boat on the loch along with two other adjacent shootings, which have the fishing in the upper river running through Strathmore. The whole of the angling may be put down as worth £150.

The Inchard is a July stream, hardly worth calling a salmon river, for the mile of its course is just one swift rocky run of foaming water. Loch Garbet-Beg, out of which it flows, holds a good many sea-trout, with some salmon and grilse, all of which rise to the fly. The angling of this loch may be put down as worth £80 a year.

The angling of the Inver, Kirkaig, and Laxford can be lumped together at about £400. The Shin produces about £650 a year, and the Naver £600.

These figures give us £5200 spent on angling rentals in the county of Sutherland.

In a like manner I have estimated the value of the anglings in all the other Scotch counties; but it would be wearisome to give them in detail. Suffice it to say their total comes to £75,000. Therefore, on the showing of these figures, which I have been particular to keep under rather than over the mark, salmon and trout fishing brings a yearly sum of £200,000 into Scotland, finds work for at least two thousand keepers and gillies, and maintains a hundred hotels, with all their servants, &c. Were it not for the salmon and the trout, the gillies would be idle, and not one penny of this large sum would find its way over the Border.

There would, of course, always be the usual amount of tourist traffic in the summer, of people

who come north merely in search of pretty scenery, bracing air, and change; and though their united disbursements must represent a large sum, yet without the fishers and the shooters the Highlands would be in a sorry plight. I am at a loss to understand how it is that hotel-keepers, tackle-makers, and gillies, and all those who are benefited by supplying the wants of the anglers, do not take a greater interest in the threatened extirpation of the salmon and the sea-trout; for if these fish became so nearly extinct as to make the pleasure of fishing for them a mockery and a farce, then good-bye to the anglers and their money.

As to the sums spent on shootings, so large is the total that it is a difficult matter to arrive even at an approximate estimate. In Perthshire alone there are four hundred and sixty-five shootings, of which about four-fifths are let to tenants, and bring in about £150,000 a year—or an average of £400 a year, which seems about a fair estimate, if it be borne in mind that this is an expensive county, and that fifty of its best shootings fetch £35,000, or an average of £700 a year! In the whole of Scotland there are about four thousand shootings; and as each of them must at least employ one keeper and one gillie during the shooting season, some estimate may be formed of the money expended in wages and the number of people employed. In the deer forests and on the larger shootings there will often be from four to six men permanently engaged, and from six to eight others working for the shooting season only. In a well-known forest, where I once spent many pleasant days, there were three foresters, three gillies, and three ponymen out each day; on the grouse-ground there were three keepers with three under-keepers, a kennel-man, and two carriers going to and from the nearest railway station—a total of eighteen men and five horses; not to mention the ponies kept for riding into the forest and those kept to carry grouse-panniers. On this property three rifles could stalk each day, while three other parties of two each could shoot grouse, or the six could combine for driving.

There are plenty of other places in the north worked on nearly identical lines, and the mention of this class of shooting brings one naturally to the subject of the enormous rents now paid. Those who forty years ago were accustomed to kill eight or ten stags, three to four hundred brace of grouse, and a hundred salmon, all for from £250 to £350 a year, never cease grumbling at the excessive rise in values and the rapacity of the proprietors. As an instance of this appreciation, I well remember that in 1857 a friend rented the Loch Inver and Inchnadamp shooting, together with a daily beat on the Inver, for £250 a year; this included the use of two bedrooms and a sitting-room at Loch Inver Hotel, and the same at Inchnadamp, for in those days there was no house on the ground. It was to this little paradise that

my premier trip to Scotland was made, and there I killed my first stag, grouse, and salmon. We used to get from six to ten stags, three to four hundred brace of grouse, a certain amount of ptarmigan, black-game, duck, and snipe, with about a hundred salmon. The same shooting at present brings in a good deal over £1000 a year, though I doubt if the grouse-shooting is better than ours was. The fishing is certainly very, very much worse, and the difference is that a good house has been built, and a large tract of hill cleared of sheep, so that more deer are killed; also the place is easier of access, for in our day the railway had not got as far as Lairg, and stopped at either Invergordon or Tain—I cannot remember which; but it was from one or the other that we had to post. All the grumbling in the world will not make rents any less. It is true that the much-to-be-pitied old-fashioned sportsman is now asked to pay a pound where years ago he paid five shillings. Then later on how he 'kicked' when it came to ten shillings! But a pound!—an increase of seventy-five per cent. on the original rent!—oh dear, no! He would rather strike than submit, so sadly he takes his departure from the lodge, the while grumbling furiously, and chiding the owner with his greed. Nevertheless, in the lapse of a few weeks some one will have taken the place at the rent asked. Unfortunately for the sportsman with moderate means, rich men appear to become more plentiful each season. It is a case of supply and demand, and cannot be helped.

With regard to the renting of shootings, it seems almost laughable and unnecessary to caution any one against being too easily led away by the wording of an advertisement or the *ipse dixit* of a shooting-agent without duly verifying the same. But, in spite of all the warnings that have been published, the man who wants a thing hotly will be apt to forget that every advertisement is framed to make the very best of the place it describes, and that every agent will be likely to do the same with regard to any place put into his hands. Therefore, after the intending lessee has satisfied himself that the sport is likely to be all right, he should take special care to make sure that the 'thoroughly well-furnished mansion or lodge' is a fact and not a myth. On this point much trouble and unpleasantness has frequently arisen. What can be more annoying for a host who has paid a big rent to take a party to a shooting-house on the 10th of August, perhaps fifteen miles from anywhere, and to find it short of beds and bedding, arm-chairs and sofas, curtains, crockery, glass, pots and pans, &c.? For these sort of troubles the estate-factor is to blame more often than the London shooting-agent, who can but take the description as furnished to him, and who cannot be expected to go to the expense of verifying it. Thus the agent is often innocently led into making 'misrepresentations,' as they are mildly called. The would-be renter's best plan

is to go and see for himself, or to send some one who will ascertain for him the true state of affairs. There is not, I think, so much 'misrepresentation' about shootings as existed formerly. Several actions at law for recovery of rent have ended in the victory of the plaintiff, a result which has done wonders for the interests of future shooting leases.

In spite, however, of all drawbacks and paltry bothers, money paid for a shooting is money well spent. The class of men who pay each year clearly shows which way the wind blows. I take up my Watson-Lyall—that capital shilling's worth—and open it at random at 'The Shootings and Salmon-fishings of Scotland.' In the first fifty over which I run my eye are the names of well-known bankers, brewers, and brokers; of dukes and distillers; of Jews, judges, and jam-makers, picture-dealers and pickle-makers, soldiers and sailors, M.P.s and merchants, newspaper owners, lawyers, &c. Depend on it, all these gentlemen, representatives of the brains and the wealth of the country, would not be silly enough to spend large sums in rents purely because it is the fashion to have a Highland shooting. No! There is something more in it than that. There is the relief from working at high pressure. There is the inducement to take exercise—and hard exercise, too—in the finest air in the world. There is the sensation of hardening muscles, clearer eyesight, and daily increasing health and vigour. There is the delight of lovely scenery, the scent and the colour of the heather, the sight of distant lochs and the sound of rippling burns; and every footstep of a day at the grouse offers some gratification to our best senses, while the philosopher-sportsman may even train himself to really laugh at his misses!

The bulk of the shooting-renters are men who work hard and make money freely. The same may be said of the salmon-fishers; but the bulk of the trouters are men who work hard but do not make money in such large sums. I have shown how in their case 'every mickle makes a muckle,' and that they spend £120,000 a year on troutting; that the salmon-fishers spend £80,000 a year on rent alone; and now to come to some estimate of the yearly sum disbursed by the shooters. It would be well within bounds if we estimate that every Scotch shooting is let at an average rent of £250 a year. There are four thousand of them; and, supposing that three-quarters are let, we arrive at a sum of £750,000 paid for rent only, and which does not include the wage-bill or any of the hundred and one sundries that are necessary. If we add these results together we arrive at a total of £995,000 annually spent in sport in the Highlands; and I believe it would be quite safe to add another £100,000 to this and yet be within the mark.

I was on one occasion the guest of an intimate and rich friend whose shooting expenditure was

very large ; and, as he first mentioned the subject to me in the course of conversation, I dropped some remark which he construed into a censure of his big rent ; whereupon he turned on me, exclaiming, ‘Worth the money ? Why, of course

it is—and no one knows it better than yourself. Why, rather than miss it, I would pay the whole thing twice over.’ And, in the belief that that man was right, so, if he could only afford it, would also do

AUGUSTUS GRIMBLE.

OF ROYAL BLOOD.

A STORY OF THE SECRET SERVICE.

CHAPTER VII.—HER MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR.



FEW minutes after the telephonic despatch had been transmitted, his lordship, still greatly agitated, with his own hand wrote a note to Scotland Yard, and sent it by one of the messengers always in attendance. Then, when we were alone again, he turned to me, saying :

‘The fact that Clunes is dead must remain an entire secret, remember. Nobody must know. I have given instructions to the police to allow no word of it to leak out ; and if an inquest is necessary, it must be held in such a manner that the press will not know the official position of the deceased. It is useless to mince matters ; therefore I tell you that this death of poor Clunes is a very grave affair indeed. No effort must be spared to find that woman,’ he added.

‘His wife, you mean?’

‘Yes,’ he said, with a heavy look upon his face. He was pacing the room with fevered steps, and whenever he came within the zone of lamplight I saw how deadly pale he was.

‘Have you any suspicion of her?’ I inquired, for I was hesitating whether I should tell him all I knew regarding her. Yet if I did I should undoubtedly reveal my own ghastly secret. No : I decided to act with discretion.

‘Suspicion?’ he echoed, starting involuntarily. ‘Why?’ he asked, quickly recovering himself. ‘What cause have I for suspicion? I only saw her once, at one of the receptions. She seemed a very refined and rather pretty woman, I thought.’

I saw he knew more of her secret history than he intended to reveal, so I did not pursue the subject further. However, in response to his inquiry I related all that had occurred at Richmond, omitting, of course, all mention of the scene between Judith and myself.

‘Extraordinary!’ he ejaculated when I had finished. ‘And the doctor has found no trace of foul play?’

‘None.’

‘Very curious,’ his lordship repeated thoughtfully. ‘The incident of the telegram of excuse is most mysterious. There seems no doubt that he went out this morning with a fixed purpose. He must have visited somebody, and with his wife’s

knowledge, too, for she would no doubt remark his shabbiness of dress. Again, he must have returned to the house secretly, for the servants did not know that he had come back.’

‘He might, of course, have let himself in with his latch-key,’ I suggested.

‘Ah, yes,’ he said. ‘I didn’t think of that. Still, the fact remains that poor Clunes has died in most mysterious circumstances, which, combined with the statement he made to me, certainly point to foul play.’

‘Was there a motive for his assassination, then?’ I cried, in quick surprise.

‘Yes,’ he answered gravely, ‘there was.’

‘Then your theory is that he has been murdered?’

‘I have no theories,’ the quick-witted old statesman responded. ‘In this matter we can only deal with facts ; and, briefly, they were these : Gordon Clunes, as servant of his Queen and his country, was in possession of certain secret information of a grave and most startling character, involving the peace of Europe and the discredit of one of the Powers—which of them I shall not say—so there was every reason why he should be silenced. You, yourself, as a diplomatist and a member of the Secret Service, have more than once gained information which, had it been known to be in your possession, might have cost you your life. Of that you are quite well aware—eh?’

I nodded. What the world-renowned Minister said was quite correct.

‘Well, then,’ he went on, ‘our enemies, determined that their secret should be preserved, have no doubt silenced him—by death.’

This argument seemed conclusive enough. I had suspected the dead man’s wife ; but his lordship, while desiring to see Judith, apparently entertained a suspicion that the guilt lay in another quarter.

‘But they struck their blow too late—too late,’ he went on, as if speaking to himself. ‘They thought to preserve their secret ; but their unfortunate victim forestalled them, and we are now forearmed. Poor Clunes!’ sighed the Premier ; ‘he has died, having done his duty honourably. He is one of the many silent heroes, and will always be remembered by me as a man who, knowing the risks he ran and the dangers that

surrounded him, acted with manful courage and saved England a war.'

'Saved a war!' I echoed. 'Was his statement of such value as that?'

'Yes. When he told it to me yesterday I thought it too wildly improbable to be true; but in the light of to-day's events all is borne out—every word of it—and I regret having misjudged him. It seems now apparent that he feared attempts would be made to silence him, yet he acted promptly and courageously in making that statement to me, which has placed in our hands a weapon against a certain combination of the Powers.'

'But you wished me to hear his statement,' I observed. 'Had it any connection with the work before me in Brussels?'

'Yes,' he replied; 'but in view of this later startling event, I have decided that his story shall remain secret. After all, it is unnecessary for you to know what is merely a key to certain other matters of which you have no knowledge.'

'Then I am to remain in ignorance of his revelations?' I said, disappointed, for the mystery had fascinated me.

'Yes,' he replied unhesitatingly. 'I have already given you instructions how to act in Brussels. Follow them, and report to me from time to time. Then, with his keen, grave eyes fixed upon me, he added earnestly, 'Remember, Crawford, that I have every confidence in you, and that your past services lead me to the hope that in this your efforts may be crowned by success.'

'Then my work in Belgium has a connection with this secret which my poor friend Clunes learnt so opportunely?'

'Yes,' he answered simply; 'it has. Beyond that, I can tell you nothing—absolutely nothing.'

I had anticipated that his lordship would at least repeat to me the story he was so anxious that I should hear from my friend's own lips; this decision, therefore, caused me the keenest dissatisfaction. Gordon was my friend, and I felt myself in duty bound to assist in the elucidation of the cause of his tragic end. That statement he had made appeared to be the key to the situation, and without knowledge of it the solution of the enigma seemed impossible.

I inquired when, under the circumstances, I should leave for Brussels.

'To-morrow,' he answered promptly. 'Go over and take up your duties at once. Drummond expects you. I shall see the Director of Criminal Investigations in the morning, and will explain that you were compelled to leave London. Therefore you will not be called as witness.'

His gray face, looking ghost-like in the shadow where he sat, was unusually grave; his eyes were fixed thoughtfully upon the table between us; and I noticed that his hand holding the quill trembled nervously.

'Then I can be of no service in seeking to clear

up the mystery of poor Clunes's death?' I said in a disappointed voice.

'No,' he responded promptly. 'It must be left to the police. Your duties lie in another direction. Act with courage and tact, and remember that your first duty is towards your country and Queen.'

'I am not likely to forget that,' I answered. Then, after some further conversation, he rose and dismissed me courteously. The electric bell rang in the hall, and old Budd opened the door and bowed me out, while the Minister returned to his work among that miscellaneous collection of papers and despatches with which his desk was piled. He was the most methodical of men, and I well knew that ere he retired to rest that night every single paper would have his attention and bear his familiar initial.

Next day, according to my orders, I left Charing Cross; and I arrived in the Belgian capital the same evening. On awaking on the following morning I found that here the spring days had come earlier than in London; the chestnuts and beeches in the long avenues wore their freshest green, the Boulevards were spick and span, and the streets, always models of extreme cleanliness, were full of life and movement. Brussels is a gay, airy, careless counterpart of its sister-city, Paris, for in it are centred all the gaiety, all the life, all the outdoor freedom for which the French capital is so notable, yet without that constant turmoil of the streets which yearly renders the Paris thoroughfares more and more like those of London.

No city in the whole of Europe is brighter, gayer, or more pleasant than Brussels in May. From the windows of my room in the Place Louise, at the corner of that magnificent thoroughfare, the Avenue de la Toison d'Or, I watched the constant procession of fine equipages, *chic* cyclists, four-in-hands, automobiles, and electric trams, as they converged into the long, shady Avenue Louise on their way to the Bois de la Cambre, one of the most picturesque woods on the whole Continent. Light and life were everywhere, for sunshine had come, and the gay-hearted Bruxellois always welcome the springtime right gladly. Already the weather was warm and bright, and the foliage of the spreading trees so thick that in some of the avenues near my abode there were spots where the sunlight did not penetrate, and it remained gloomy even at midday. In Brussels—the lively little city where the women are so neat-ankled and *chic*, and the men so smart; where the carriages are as well-ordered as those in the Row at home, and the blackbirds sing in the great trees opposite one's house—they have indeed brought enjoyment to a fine art. In May it is undoubtedly a City of Pleasure, with its columns, its fountains, its leafy, breezy Boulevards, its countless cafés, and its gay outdoor life; while Monsieur le Brave Belge, the gay débonnaire

of the capital, has almost forgotten his native Flemish in his tireless pains to acquire a Parisian accent pure and undefiled. The city on the Senne has, with truth, been modelled after the city on the Seine, and with a happy result.

Indeed, I was not sorry to return to this cheerful, careless city, pleasant indeed after a wearying life beside the Bosphorus; for I knew it well, from the venerable Grande Place where rises the brocaded Hôtel de Ville, with its impossible embroidered spire and ancient Guild Houses opposite, and where the old market-women gossip beneath their big white umbrellas covering their stalls, even to the gilded *salon* of the pretty, youthful, and skittish Baroness de Melreux, of whose escapades Brussels society is always so fond of whispering, and whose elderly and portly husband is one of the leading men in the Chamber.

Day after day I bought the London newspapers at the kiosk of the Grand Hotel, and scanned them, eager to see some report of the inquest upon the body of poor Gordon. Nothing, however, transpired. It was possible, of course, that the inquiry had been held, and that some false name had been bestowed upon my unfortunate friend in order to avoid the attraction of the press. Thousands of inquests are held in London annually which are never reported in the papers. The list of coroners' inquiries must be exhibited publicly at the coroner's office before they are held; but when secrecy is desired the name is very frequently altered. For example, a nobleman who dies mysteriously is usually designated by his family name only, his title being omitted; and the family name being generally a rather common one, the vigilant reporter is almost certain, in journalistic parlance, to 'let it slide.'

In the case of Gordon Clunes, however, Lord Macclesfield had distinctly told me that he intended to take steps to keep the truth from the public; therefore I presumed that the inquest had been held, my unfortunate friend had been buried, and that Scotland Yard were making secret inquiries.

What, I wondered, had been the result of the post-mortem? Had death actually been due to natural causes, or were there signs of foul play?

I longed to write to the inspector, Glass, at Richmond, but, in the circumstances, saw that such communication would be ill-advised. The police were undoubtedly under strict orders from the Commissioner; therefore I could learn nothing.

And of Judith, the woman who had fled—what of her?

So the pleasant spring days passed in Brussels, and I remained in entire ignorance of all that had occurred. Truth to tell, my duties were at first of a very light character; and after an attendance of an hour or so each day at the Embassy, I usually spent the afternoons in the

Bois, and the evenings at one or other of the gay, brightly-lit cafés down in the city, the 'Grand,' the 'Métropole,' or the 'Couronne,' where I could sit out on the pavement, take my after-dinner coffee, smoke, and watch the passers-by. The theatre possessed but little attraction for me; I preferred *al fresco* enjoyment in the evening.

The staff at the British Embassy, that great gray mansion in the Rue de Spa, was a particularly pleasant one, Giffard, the military attaché, having been an old colleague of mine at Madrid; and Frank Hamilton, the first secretary, was also friend of long ago. My first interview with my new chief, Sir John Drummond, had been entirely cordial. I found him one morning in his bright, sunny, private room—a tall, well-built man of fifty, with grayish hair, full gray beard, and a face gentle and kindly. Before him lay the letter Lord Macclesfield had written regarding my duties, and he welcomed me with pleasant affability, expressing pleasure at my appointment.

'Here, of course, we have not such heavy duties as they have at Vienna or Constantinople,' he said; 'but it appears from this letter of the Marquess that you are appointed for a special purpose. I presume that before you left London the whole facts were laid before you?'

'Yes,' I replied. 'His lordship gave me a full explanation.'

'Good,' he said. 'Of course the utmost discretion and secrecy are necessary. Here, although the actual duties are not so heavy as in the larger capitals, nevertheless the undercurrents at work are legion, and diplomacy must be conducted with the utmost finesse. There is war in the air; and from Brussels, rather than from anywhere else, might emanate the single spark required to fire the mine. In the case of war we must preserve the Belgians as our friends. If British soldiers are ever landed on the Continent they must land at Antwerp. Therefore, in view of all the facts, you see that, although you are nominally attached to this Embassy as a secretary, you have an extremely delicate task to accomplish. You must solve the mystery in silence, without awaking the least suspicion of the thousand and one spies who surround us. You are to have perfect liberty of action, according to this private despatch; and I trust that you will bring your efforts to a successful issue.'

'I hope I shall,' I answered. 'But has anything further transpired of late to arouse suspicion or alarm?'

'Russia, France, and Germany have all three sought to combat my efforts during the past week,' he answered gravely; 'and I have suspicion that a cipher despatch containing the draft of a secret convention has recently fallen in some inexplicable manner into the hands of those unknown agents with whom you will have to

deal. The situation here is, I honestly confess, alarming.'

'And you will keep me advised of any facts which may come to your knowledge?' I asked.

'Of course,' the Minister replied. He had not mentioned anything of the strange affair which had taken place in London, and I had hesitated to broach the subject, for was it not a secret between the chief and myself? The remainder of our conversation was devoted to various technicalities regarding my secretarial duties, for it had been arranged that, in order that our enemies should not suspect the true reason of my appointment, I should assume the position of third secretary of legation.

As I went out I found Giffard, a tall, handsome, dark-eyed Guardsman, smoking a cigarette on the

steps which led down into the courtyard, beyond which lay the stables and the servants' quarters.

'Well,' he exclaimed, 'seen the chief?'

'Yes,' I responded.

'Good fellow—isn't he? Everybody here gets on famously. No jealousies, or any of that confounded humbug, and as much gaiety as you like. You'll like Brussels, old chap.'

'Yes,' I said, 'I think I shall;' and then, at my invitation, we went down to the Boulevard Anspach to lunch.

Giffard was an exceedingly good fellow, a thorough type of the merry, easy-going British cavalry officer, and a great favourite with the ladies. I had known him for years; and of the whole staff of the legation he alone knew the real reason why I had been appointed there.

MORE ABOUT ELECTRICAL INKLESS PRINTING.

[MR A. SANDERSON, Managing Director of the Electrical Inkless Printing Syndicate, sends the following communication, which, as it is supplementary to an article, 'Inkless Printing,' in our November issue, and also supplies additional information, we have pleasure in laying before our readers.]



In referring to the demonstration of electrical inkless printing given four months ago in London, it was quite right to state that the results then shown represented only an initial stage rather than the finality of the process. It would be difficult to say in this wonderful century of discovery when any process has reached finality, and printing by electricity without ink is no exception. Printing as now carried on is the result of nearly five centuries of progress, and no one can say that its processes are anywhere near finality.

Just at the time of the demonstration already referred to, and as the result of a long series of investigations and experiments, an entirely new combination of sensitising chemicals was discovered, which has immensely helped forward the completion—or, more strictly speaking, the commercial practicability—of electrical printing. As the patent of this new discovery is as yet only in its preliminary stages, we cannot enter into details; but we may explain wherein the advance consists.

In previous patents, as in all similar inkless processes, it was only possible to get the right results with paper chemically damped at the moment of use, the moisture being necessary to overcome the electric resistance. Every printer knows that this damping process has for many years been almost entirely abandoned, except in a few newspaper offices; and printers are not

likely to return to a system which is not only time-wasting but unsuited to most modern papers, with their wood cellulose bodies and burnished clay surfaces.

The newly discovered sensitising chemical combination is totally distinct from the sensitisers generally used in photography. It does not, as with other inkless processes, in any way include the use of nitrate of silver, which, as is rightly noted, is far too expensive for printing purposes. The chemicals now used are plentiful and cheap, may take the place of some chemicals hitherto largely used in making paper, and therefore will not in any way increase the cost. Further, there were many difficulties met with in incorporating the chemicals previously used into the pulp in the process of manufacture. The new sensitising combination removes most of these difficulties, and such as still remain are of minor importance, and are almost daily being overcome as our methods become perfected.

But the full significance of the latest advance is in the fact that (first) the new sensitising chemicals are incorporated in the pulp in the ordinary process of manufacture, and (second) that the machine-paper—not hand-made—is printed dry, thus removing the final disadvantage to the immediate adoption of electric printing.

It has already been pointed out that all machines now in use can be adapted for electric printing, the inking arrangements only being discarded. It only remains, therefore, to show the commercial or economical advantages afforded by the new process. The sizes of printing-machines and the size and class of work vary so considerably that this is best done by selecting an example; and, as the saving in printing ink is one of the largest items, the example may be based on that at present important article.

Printed work varying so much in character,

scarcely any two jobs being exactly the same as regards the quantity of ink used, it is difficult to lay down any definite amount. We will, therefore, take an example of frequent occurrence—a form of eight quarto pages of an illustrated catalogue, with light display, and five of its pages consisting of process blocks.

It was found that every 1000 impressions consumed slightly over one pound of 2s. black ink. In the week's work of fifty-four hours the outturn was 36,000 impressions, giving a total cost for ink of £3, 12s., or—reckoning on fifty-one working weeks—of £183, 12s. for the year. For the same amount of work, the cost of electric current at 1½d. per hour for fifty-four hours would be 6s. 9d. per week, or £17, 4s. 3d. for the year; or, with the added cost (£20) for license to use the process, £37, 4s. 3d. This gives a balance in favour of electrical inkless printing, for ink alone, on a year's working of one machine, of £146, 7s. 9d.

With this experience before them, printers can work out other examples for themselves from their own particular run of ordinary or special jobs, and thus arrive at an idea of the immediate saving in ink alone in cost of production offered to them by electrical inkless printing. The foregoing presents only one of many economies of electrical inkless printing which it is scarcely necessary to enter on here, but which the practical printer will at once see for himself.

It may be well to note here that we are aware of other 'inkless' processes before the public, but they are incomplete and founded on formulas discarded some time ago as of no practical value. Some of them require a subsequent process of washing, developing, and fixing of the print, obviously not commercially economical when applied to printing.

Another point referred to in the November issue of this *Journal* is that of colour-printing. So far our energies have been devoted to the perfection of a process for black printing, which constitutes fully 75 per cent. of all the work done. This is a sufficiently extensive field to occupy all our attention, and we do not, of course, expect to fill it in a year or two, as we recognise that there are many prejudices and objections to be overcome. But, at the same time, we have not lost sight of the colour problem; and experiments already made convince us that the electric process is capable of being adapted to all classes of colour work. In fact, it has already been demonstrated to be possible in the analogous wonderful invention of Schezepanik of weaving pictures in colours by electricity. In this direction we have found that the current can be so

regulated or governed by means of a 'resist' as to give any required shade, tint, or tone, from the lightest to the deepest required, and sheets printed some six months ago and since constantly exposed to the light are as perfect in solidity and depth of colour now as when printed—which is more than can be said of many of the fugitive aniline printing inks now used.

With regard to the reliability of electricity, the 'resist' above mentioned is the 'governor' regulating the supply of current; and, being fitted to every machine, it minimises any danger there may be from any escape of current. It gives instant notice of anything wrong, and the operator in attendance has simply to push a button and the current is at once shut off. Pushing the button back again turns on the current. For small work less than one ampère of current, which may be conducted from an ordinary eight-candle lamp, is sufficient; and for the largest work—say a big newspaper sheet—the consumption cannot exceed four ampères per hour—a quite harmless quantity. The whole electric arrangement fitted to the printing-machine is as near as possible automatic in its action and as absolutely under control as turning on or off the electric light.

As regards the point raised whether high speeds are compatible with any desired depth or density of colour, it is our experience, as we have already said, that depth of tone is easily regulated. At the Exhibition at Blackpool in connection with the recent Health Congress, we gave, by special request, a demonstration of the electrical printing process, which was witnessed by hundreds of scientists, printers, and others, when a small rotary machine was run at the rate of 6000 impressions per hour, the sheets automatically cut and delivered from the reel, and the work done was pronounced perfect in every respect. Demonstrations with the same machine have also recently been given, by request, to the patent authorities and official experts at Berlin and Vienna, with equally successful results. At Blackpool one of the delegates, representing a well-known corporation, has recommended the adoption of the process for the printing works about to be erected to do the municipal printing, and several newspaper owners—two in London—have placed their fast rotary machines at our disposal as soon as we are ready to commence operations. The demonstrations in Germany and Austria have also led to similar offers.

As we have already said, we do not claim finality for our process, but we do claim that it is commercially practical, and in due time we hope to prove it.



BONAMY'S ADVENTURE.

CHAPTER II.



ATER on, as I considered things, it struck me that very likely this photographing was a deep-laid scheme of Bonamy's for some sort of observation. He doubtless had his suspicions. At any rate I should hear all about it that night. I can't say I had progressed much myself. I had narrowly eyed all the servants. I quite embarrassed the house-maid with my scrutiny as I found her in my room preparing my bath in the evening; and I think the footman thought me very undignified in entering into such lengthy conversation when he called me in the morning. I must say they all had the appearance of being exceptionally respectable and honest; and though I knew appearances were deceitful, yet I believed in them up to a point.

The phaeton and roans came round at three o'clock, and we drove off, leaving Bonamy with Tommy dancing around, deep in the mysteries of camera, dry plates, platinotypes, and other paraphernalia.

Cissy drove well, and the roans were perfectly trained. I had seen to that. I had had one painful visit with a drive behind two abominable half-broken colts, which she was pleased to consider she was getting 'into shape,' and I never intended to repeat the experiment.

'I think he is decidedly *deep*,' said my cousin presently, as she gently tickled the back of one of the roans with her whip.

'The off or the near?' I questioned innocently.

'Bertie, you are a dear creature, and know a great deal about many things, but you are not quick at what one is *thinking*.'

I replied that quickness was a matter of comparison, and against the quickness of some people that of others might appear wanting.

'You always have a nice, comfortable speech ready, anyhow,' she laughed. 'But don't you think he's *deep*? I do.'

'I think he *appears* deep, if you mean Bonamy,' I answered; 'because he is so absorbed in things in which he is interested that one forgets he can be interested in more than one thing at once. All the time he was talking about pictures I dare say he was thinking out things about that necklace. At any rate, I know he notices everything.'

'It is possible to notice too much,' said Cissy meditatively. 'It does not do to get an idea and then make everything fit.'

'That is no doubt a fault he might fall into,' I answered. 'Do you think—you were talking to him before dinner—do you think he has any clue?'

'Yes, I think he has; but he is quite right—he wants to confirm it before he speaks. I almost wish he *hadn't*, Bertie,' she added presently, as we turned into a long avenue which led to Cravenswood House.

'I thought you were so anxious about it, and so distressed. It's enough to *be* distressed about.'

'I know,' said Cissy dolefully.

'It is very serious, I think. You will have to replace it if it is not found. I suppose you know that.'

'Oh yes; I know all that. Do you suppose it isn't dreadfully on my mind? That is the worst of having a gay manner—one is supposed never to feel anything! But there are things that one would pay any money to save happening; and—I am so afraid he may be on the *wrong* scent.'

We had no time for further conversation, as at that moment we drew up at the hall-door; and afterwards, coming home, she appeared to have forgotten even the necklace in her excitement over one or two pieces of local news we had acquired during our visit.

When we reached home we found Bonamy in the library, deep in some scientific-looking work. He appeared to have taken a great many photographs, which we were to see upon the morrow. At tea-time the conversation turned upon thought-reading—telepathy, as it is called.

'Our thoughts carry farther than we suppose,' Bonamy was saying. 'The thought-waves are always going about, only our senses are generally too dull to respond to them.'

'What a mercy!' exclaimed Cissy. 'I shouldn't like to know what people thought. I like to believe they think nice things about me, and I dare say they don't.'

Before I had time to reassure her upon this point I was struck by something in Miss Evans's face. She had been making the tea, and for an instant she stopped and looked at Bonamy as she poured out his cup. It was a singular look. I could not understand it. But it was only for an instant; it quickly passed.

'If we knew each other's thoughts, it would leave us no mysteries, at any rate,' said Bonamy as he munched a piece of toast. 'The voice of even the necklace might cry out.'

'Ah!' said Cissy as she looked at him with eager eyes, 'I wish it would.'

'Perhaps it may—yet,' he answered.

Again I noticed upon Miss Evans's face that peculiar look. And then suddenly it flashed across me that Bonamy was suspecting her, and that she was aware of it.

At that moment the children burst into the

room ; after tea they generally spent an hour with their mother. Cissy upon this occasion was seized upon by Tommy for 'Halma,' whilst Gwendoline and I had a game of draughts.

Miss Harborough had been spending the day with some friends, who lived in the neighbourhood, and she only appeared at dinner. She had on a very becoming frock, and looked almost handsome, I thought. Bonamy appeared as if he thought so too, and they got on so well that I felt that some one ought to mention the three children and second wife before it became serious.

That evening we had a long discussion over our pipes. Bonamy would not admit who it was, but I could see there was some one in the house about whom he had doubts.

'I have discovered a very curious and important clue,' he said presently, 'upon which hangs much. But I can say no more at present. I shall investigate further to-morrow.'

The next day was Sunday. Cissy was very particular about church—not for visitors ; they had even Sabbath liberty, and could do as they liked ; but for the other inmates of the house at least one service was expected. Cissy herself always attended both morning and afternoon. I think she extracted a certain amount of satisfaction from sitting under the beautiful stained-glass window she had put up to her husband's memory. A man to whom apostles and saints with aureoles are dedicated becomes in time, in a sort of a way, almost a saint also. I accompanied Cissy and Miss Harborough and the children. Miss Evans sat somewhere in the choir, and had started a little earlier. Bonamy stayed at home, sharing the responsibilities of house-guarding with the dogs and the kitchen-maid.

'Hartop, my dear fellow,' he said to me as we went to the library to smoke after luncheon—'Hartop, my dear fellow, I hope you are braced up by the sermon ?'

I looked at him questioningly, I suppose, for he went on : 'You've got to come with me upon an exciting exploration to-night. I want good nerves, and such as are not easily shaken.'

'What on earth do you mean ?' I exclaimed.
'What sort of exploration ?'

'The west wing,' he replied laconically.

'The west wing !' I repeated. 'No one goes there. It has been shut up for years. Besides, it is locked. You know the horrible story. I don't believe it has been entered since that event happened.'

'Was it long ago ?' asked Bonamy as he refilled his pipe and lit it carefully.

'About seven years, I suppose. Gwendoline was about two, and Tommy quite a baby.'

'Did Lady Donnithorne use it—before ?'

'Yes ; she was there, of course, with her husband.'

'And she has never entered it since ?'

'No ; you can understand that.'

Bonamy was silent for a moment.

'Well, we will have to visit it to-night.'

'All right,' I said. 'But how will you get in ?'

'I have the key.'

'Did she give it to you ?'

'No ; I discovered it,' he answered.

I pondered over this new development. What the west wing could have to do with the lost necklace I could not conceive. And I must say I should have preferred a daylight excursion in that part of the house. Still, I was quite ready to do it if it was necessary, and I intimated to Bonamy that I would be prepared.

'About what time are you going ?' I asked presently, interrupting him in a chain of 'evidence,' as I imagined.

'About a couple of hours after we go to bed. I don't want any one to hear or see us.'

'I will be ready,' I replied. 'Have you got a further clue ?' I queried, in a tone of voice, however, which did not press for an answer.

He nodded his head mysteriously.

'I am afraid it is closing in upon *some one*,' he added.

I thought that Cissy looked at Bonamy a little anxiously sometimes in the intervals of dinner. 'Had he approached discovery, or had he failed ?' I felt was in her mind. We had only till to-morrow.

When we retired for the night I did not undress, but lay upon the outside of my bed with a book, and by my side a shaded candle. But though I had a selection of the newest novels (thoughtfully placed in my room by my hostess), I could not read. My thoughts kept travelling to the west wing, and I watched for the two hours to have an ending. But I am very regular in my habits, and I fell asleep, I suppose, for suddenly I found Bonamy standing by me.

'It is not only virgins who slumber,' he remarked, with rather doubtful taste, I thought.
'Put your socks on over your slippers.'

There was a determined look about him, as if he meant business. He had a small lamp in his hand, which, I believe, belonged to Tommy, and he carried a box of matches.

I followed him down the passages, stepping softly and cautiously amongst the shadows. Once he stood quite still for a few minutes, listening. But there was not a sound to be heard save the tick of the great hall-clock and a dog distantly baying. We turned down into the corridor presently, and I stared about me curiously. There was no carpet underfoot ; the boards were stained black with age, and they looked dull, as if no polishing had been done lately. On the walls hung portraits in sombre rows, and there were some quaint old chests and carved chairs standing at intervals. At the bottom, behind heavy tapestry curtains, was the door. I held these back as Bonamy, taking a key out of his pocket, unlocked it. He glanced at me as he did so.

'Some one has been here not very long ago,' he said. 'Look there!'

He shed the light of the lamp upon the floor as he spoke; and, stooping down till I got in the right position, I saw that the coating of dust which covered it had been displaced, and there were the faint marks of footsteps both coming and going.

Things were beginning to be exciting. The door opened easily, and I followed him down a softly-carpeted passage. A stuffy, unwholesome odour pervaded the place—the odour of shut-up air and a want of ventilation. We passed several doors which were closed—closed for seven years! I wondered what lay behind them. My imagination, generally very prosaic, took fire. I felt surrounded by mystery.

Presently, when we were nearly at the end of the passage, we came to one which was slightly open.

'This is the room I want,' said Bonamy—'the one with a big bay window.'

He pushed the door open and walked in, flashing the lamp around, and I followed him. It was a large double-bedded room, with quaint old furniture. Everything was covered with dust, and the curtains and bed-hangings had a limp and yellow appearance. The windows were unshuttered, however, and the blinds up; and, through the trees which grew close outside, the moon glittered. I noticed that the air was not so musty as the passages, and it came over me that not long ago the windows must have been opened. I said so to Bonamy, and he nodded his head, and, going up to them, began to examine them carefully.

'This one has been opened,' he said presently; 'and it did not open very easily.'

He pointed to the edges of the frame where some sharp instrument had been used to force it; and upon the sill I noticed some little pieces of dislodged paint had fallen.

'It is all just as I supposed,' he said. In his tone was a touch of satisfaction. 'Now,' he continued cheerfully, 'we must examine the floor.'

He went down upon his hands and knees, and whilst I held the lamp he took out of his pocket a piece of candle, which he lighted, and moved about as if searching for something.

'It is very curious,' he said at last, having examined all the boarded portion of the floor. 'There are a man's footsteps quite distinct *here*, but only a woman's outside the door in the corridor. Two women,' he corrected, 'one with slippers and one with her feet bare.'

'Are there women's feet here also?' I asked breathlessly.

'Yes,' he answered. 'Can't you see them?'

He pointed as he spoke to the floor where the carpet ended, just by an old carved bureau. In front of this I could distinctly see the marks, clearly cut in the dust, of some small bare toes.

'It is very odd,' I muttered below my breath. 'How do you account for it? Are you sure it is only the women's feet outside in the corridor?'

He nodded his head. 'I examined them when I was doing the photographs, and again while you were in church,' he said. 'I also found the marks of a man's footsteps amongst the bushes underneath this window.'

'And that is how it was stolen. He must have been let in,' I gasped. 'But who were the women?'

'That is the question,' he said, knitting his brows. 'Who were the women? I am afraid things point to *some one*,' he said after a pause, as we stood staring at each other.

'She has occasionally looked—peculiar,' I admitted.

'Looks are not everything,' he replied cautiously. 'People sometimes look as if they knew something because they are afraid of looking as if they knew something—particularly a nervous sort of girl like her. Nevertheless, I took an outline of her foot,' he continued, as, after fumbling in his pocket, he produced the cut-out form in paper of a woman's shoe.

'This also whilst we were in church,' I observed pleasantly.

But Bonamy was upon his knees again, and did not answer.

'Yes, it is exact,' he said presently, as he got up, brushing the knees of his trousers.

'Could she have stolen it, or brought it to him—whatever he was?' I queried, putting it all together.

'That does not follow, though it is suspicious, I own,' he answered thoughtfully.

'Look at the bed,' he said suddenly.

The light of the lamp was upon it. It had a mattress, and over it was a crimson silk cover. Upon this was the mark as if some one had lain upon it, denting it in, and there was the trace as of a head upon the pillow.

'Some one has slept here,' he said. And we both stood staring silently upon it.

It was very uncanny. Why should the burglar want to sleep there instead of making off with his booty?

'What will you do?' I said at last. 'Do you think you can get her to say anything?'

'That depends,' he answered. 'I shall have to think it over.'



ON SPANISH PROVERBS.



T has been an opinion,' says Lord Bacon, 'that the French are wiser than they seem, and that the Spaniards seem wiser than they are.' Well, whatever the Dons may be in reality, they certainly appear wise enough, to judge from their proverbs, which are justly admired for their peculiar shrewdness.

There are few languages, if any, richer in proverbs than the Spanish. Many of these are the outcome of a life's experience summed up in a single sentence, and contain a pithy shrewdness which it would be hard to surpass. Others again, like many proverbs of the Scotch, combine shrewdness with the caustic humour of the man who takes a cynical view of human life.

Proverbs relating to places are numerous. Of the air of Madrid they say that it is so subtle that it kills a man and does not extinguish a candle. The climate of the same city is also described as six months of winter and six months of Hades (*seis meses de invierno y seis meses de infierno*). The Italians say, 'See Naples and die;' and the Spaniards, 'He who has not seen Seville has seen nothing marvellous.' 'Rain or no rain, there is always wheat in Orihuela,' is an allusion to a garden spot of Spain where irrigation is extensively practised. The English proverb 'to carry coals to Newcastle' has as its equivalent, 'to carry iron to Biscay,' which, centring in Bilbao, is the great iron-district of Spain.

In the former Spanish colonies local allusions are not so numerous; but the following advice has led to the fortune of many: 'If you go to the Indies, let it be to a spot whence you can see the volcanoes'—in reference to the comparative coolness of those elevated regions and the great fertility of a volcanic soil.

The following are a few relating to national or provincial characteristics: 'A Moor ruins himself with wedding-feasts, a Jew with Passovers, and a Christian with lawsuits.' 'The Catalans make bread from stones,' is an allusion to the well-known industry of the inhabitants of Catalonia—the Spanish Lancashire. If one meets a successful Spanish merchant or manufacturer abroad, the chances are that he is a Catalan; indeed, Spanish colonisation has been almost entirely the work of the men of the northern provinces—principally Catalans and Gallegos (natives of Galicia). The latter are the Irish of Spain, emigrating to all parts of the Spanish-speaking world, but generally less educated than the Catalans; they perform the most menial class of labour—so much so that in Spanish the name 'Gallego' is synonymous with 'porter.'

The indolent and shiftless nature of the in-

habitants of the southern provinces is hit off by the following proverbs: 'In Valencia the men are women and the earth is water;' 'When you see an Andaluz, make the sign of the cross; when you see a Sevillano, make it with both hands; when you see a Cordobes, make it with hands and feet.' The natives of Cordoba have a bad reputation in the Peninsula; a Spanish writer, alluding to one of his characters, says: 'He was a Cordobes. I say it, so that you may know he was dyed in the wool.' The following also applies principally to the southerner: 'The English advance by sea, and the Russians by land; while I, who am a Spaniard, am lying in bed.' Another proverb regarding our countrymen is, 'War with all the world, but peace with England,' which would seem to indicate the alarm created by Drake and Frobisher and their successors, the buccaneers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, who made large fortunes by the capture of Spanish galleons laden with treasure from the mines of Mexico and Peru.

Proverbs uncomplimentary to the fair sex are common: 'A woman, like a pavement, should be well trampled on to be kept in order;' 'A woman is like a candle: twist her neck if you wish her to be good;' 'Beware of a bad woman, and do not trust a good one;' 'Crying in a woman, and limping in a dog, is all a sham;' 'A cock crows on his own dunghill, but hens cackle everywhere' (this in reference to the supposed garrulousness and inquisitive disposition of the sex); 'Show me a magpie without a spot, and I will show you a woman without a fault.' In English, counterparts are not wanting—for example:

A woman, a dog, and a walnut-tree—
The more you beat them the better they be.

Mothers-in-law and stepmothers come in for a good deal of sarcasm; some of the proverbs in regard to them will not stand translation. Of a man who is accounted lucky they say, 'If he fell from the roof of a house he would fall on the top of his mother-in-law.'

Readers of *Don Quixote* will remember that Sancho Panza was in the habit of letting off proverbs on every conceivable occasion—and not singly, but in strings. In this case Cervantes only portrayed the ordinary characteristic of a Spanish peasant. The following proverbs are taken at random from *Don Quixote*: 'To do good to a clown is like throwing water into the sea' (a fruitless task is also referred to as 'looking for pears on an elm-tree' and 'preaching in the desert'); 'A virtuous woman and a broken leg should stay at home;' 'A fool knows more about his own business than a wise man about other people's;' 'Don't say "rope" to the family

of the man who has been hanged ;' 'There are no birds in last year's nest ;' 'To go for wool and come back shorn ;' 'Tell me who are your companions, and I will tell you who you are ;' 'Pray to God, but swing the hammer also.'

We give a few sayings as follows, with their English equivalents, not taken in a literal sense, but which convey the same moral : 'He who sows thorns should not go barefooted ;' 'Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones ;' 'Fleeing from the bull, he fell into the river ;' 'Out of the frying-pan into the fire.' 'Hard bread is better than none ;' 'Half a loaf is better than no bread.' 'He who looks through the keyhole sees his misfortune ;' 'Eavesdroppers never hear any good of themselves.' 'The ass that belongs to many is eaten by the wolves ;' 'Everybody's business is nobody's business.' 'The river in flood is a gain to the fisherman ;' 'It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good.' 'Give a clown your hand and he will take your elbow ;' and, again, 'Let a beggar sleep in your barn and he will make himself your heir ;' 'Give a clown an inch and he will take an ell.' 'Take that bone to another dog ;' 'Tell that to the Marines.' 'To sell honey to the bee-keeper,' another form of 'carrying coals to Newcastle.' 'When the horseshoe clatters there is a nail loose ;' 'Empty vessels make most noise.'

Ambitious, vain, and avaricious people are reminded that 'Dunghills rise, while battlements fall down ;' 'He who tries to get rich in a year gets hanged at the end of six months ;' 'A great leap causes a great jolting ;' 'A level road is the safest ;' 'The devil lies in a rich man's coffer ;' and, 'Although a monkey arrays herself in silk, she is still a monkey.'

Here are a few relating to marriage : 'He who goes far from home to seek a wife either is a deceiver or is deceived ;' 'Before you marry look what you are about, for it is not a knot that you can untie ;' 'The rich wife "wears the breeks ;"' 'Get your son married when you like, and your daughter when you can.' Of a man who marries twice it is said, 'The first wife sweeps the floor, the second is a lady.'

In Spain proverbs are more commonly used in ordinary conversation than in any other country of Europe, a custom that may be accounted for by long intercourse with the Moors, whose language is permeated with proverbs. Mr Ford has said on this subject, 'A proverb, well introduced, is as decisive of an argument in Spain as a bet is in England. This shooting a discourse is always greeted with a smile from high and low.' Thus, when speaking of matrimony the Spaniard will say, 'The day you marry, you kill or cure yourself.' To express his disapproval of revenge he says, 'He begins the quarrel who strikes the second blow.' His explanation for any surprising method of procedure is: 'We must suit

our behaviour to the occasion.' Simulation he shrewdly counsels by the saying, 'Tell a lie and find a truth.' 'Snuff me these candles' means 'Clear up this difficulty for me.' Gamblers are warned with, 'He who shuffles the cards does not cut them,' or 'You may lose as well by a card too much as by a card too little.' Should you wish to change the subject before it has been thoroughly thrashed out, the reminder is: 'We have still to skin the tail.'

The Spaniards are a patriotic people, and when Italians tell them to 'See Naples and die,' they match it with 'See Seville and die ;' and, boasting of the luxuriant fertility of their Andalusian plains, they say, 'The water alone of the Guadalquivir fattens horses better than the barley of other countries.'

The haughty Hidalgos sometimes condescend to be humorous. 'Let my death come from Spain' is a joke referring to their slowness in business matters. Talking of the stubbornness of their Aragonese countrymen, 'They drive in nails with their heads' is the expression. They are pleasant also on the climate of their capital, describing it as 'Three months in an ice-house, and nine in a furnace.' Once, after the completion of a beautiful bridge in Madrid over the Manzanares, a little river that lacks water during the summer, a wag remarked, 'They should sell the bridge and buy some water for the river.'

'Home, sweet home, there is no place like home,' is English, and is thus rendered in Spanish : 'The reek of my own house is better than the fire of another's.'

The New Woman would doubtless get little countenance in the Peninsula. Were she seen there in divided skirts, flying along on a bicycle, she would soon be told, 'Let every wench mind her spinning wheel.'

The following miscellaneous proverbs may close the list : 'He who buys a horse buys care ;' 'That hen is not a good one who eats in your yard and lays in your neighbour's ;' 'The rope breaks at the weakest point ;' 'Never deceive your doctor, your confessor, nor your lawyer ;' 'Give a greedy horse a short halter ;' 'Shoemakers go to church and pray that cattle may die of the plague' (so that leather may be cheap); 'Every one wishes to carry the water to his own mill, and leave his neighbour's water-course dry ;' 'He who always lies to me never deceives me ;' 'The man who shows you unwonted attention either wishes to deceive you or has need of you ;' 'The secret of two is God's secret, the secret of three is everybody's secret ;' 'Tell your secret to a man and you give him your liberty ;' 'A poor man is always full of schemes ;' 'If you have a lazy boy, set his dinner before him, and then send him on an errand ;' 'The lazy youth will take ten steps to avoid taking one ;' 'To swim for the shore and drown as you reach it ;' 'A golden scabbard

covers a leaden sword ; 'Salt once spilt cannot be well picked up.'

Lastly, let us wind up with two proverbs which, by their stately, chivalrous tone, are quite in keep-

ing with the lofty character of the Spaniards : 'The king goes as far as he may, not as far as he would ;' and, 'When thou seest thine house in flames, approach and warm thyself by it.'

G R E A T M E N ' S G A R R E T S .

By T. ST E. HAKE.

THE early days of famous men have always roused the keenest interest. The frequent struggle for existence, the almost insuperable difficulties under which their first projects are often achieved, constitute an attractive page in biography. An affection for the attic, more especially shown by the literary aspirant, has helped to throw a distinct halo of romance around their lives. Balzac, as he has himself recorded, was enabled during his years in a garret to amass a treasure of delightful remembrances. His great masterpiece, *Le Père Goriot*, written long afterwards, contains many a touch that was mentally incubated in those attic days. His lodging was in Paris, near the Library of the Arsenal. It was as dark as an oven, where the wind whistled through the door and windows like Tulon through his flute, though not so pleasantly. It was furnished in the most scanty manner. Here it was that Balzac commenced that drudgery which continued almost to the end. He has given a graphic sketch of his life at this period : 'Three pennyworth of bread, and two of milk, and three of sausage-meat prevented me from dying of hunger, and kept my brain singularly clear. My room cost me three sous a day ; I burnt my midnight oil for three sous ; and I was my own housemaid. To save the washerwoman I wore flannel shirts. I warmed myself by means of a charcoal fire, which is cheap and cheerless. . . . I only go out marketing every three or four days, and then only to the cheapest tradespeople in this quartier.'

Even Victor Hugo was never seen in a more poetic light than when, having taken refuge in Belgium, he lived like an ascetic in a veritable garret. 'It was reached by a winding staircase,' says Rochefort in his memoir, 'a tiny attic, so lightly roofed that the sky could be seen through the tiles ; and, as Victor Hugo somewhat proudly declared, the rain occasionally found its way into the room.' A folding bedstead, a regular military piece of furniture, divided the room into two parts. It was here that the mighty poet composed his masterpieces. He had a small shelf hinged to the wall at about the level of his elbow, and by this means, when lowered to a horizontal position, his writing-table was formed. He never sat down, but composed while making the four strides to which he was limited by the smallness of his cage. The day's labour at an

end, the plank was fixed flat against the wall in order to give a few inches more of space for moving about. 'It seemed,' says his friend, 'as if one were reading his celebrated poem, *Regard jeté dans une mansarde*.' The love of an attic could hardly have been more pronounced ! And yet Béranger almost excelled Hugo in the same direction. While living on the fifth story in the Boulevard St Martin, 'without money and with no prospects,' he had installed himself in his garret with inexpressible satisfaction, because, as he wrote, 'to live alone and to compose verse at my leisure appeared to me the very summit of felicity.' Speaking in this spirit of that famous 'sky parlour,' he exclaims, 'What a beautiful view I enjoyed from its window ! What delight I felt in sitting there of an evening, hovering, as it were, over the immense city, from which a loud, hoarse murmur incessantly ascended, especially when there blended with it the noise and tumult of some great storm.' He wrote and starved there until the dread of the conscription fell upon him. But even then Providence seemed to befriend him. He says : 'I was bald at twenty-three. . . . When the gendarmes came in search of conscripts I removed my hat. They looked at my bald head, and were satisfied. They went away without me.' One day, while sitting there, engaged in mending a hole in the knee of his trousers, a letter was put into his hand. The Senator Bonaparte desired to see him ; and from that hour his fortune changed.

Even the great Rousseau resided for four years in a small garret in a street off St Etienne du Mont. There he suffered mental as well as intense physical pain. But in spite of his reverses, he has given assurance, in writing of his life and his works, that it was there 'I enjoyed the most exquisite pleasures of my life—that of producing my *Studies of Nature*.' The early lives of the two most widely read writers in France at the present hour, Zola and Daudet, afford striking illustrations of how history continues to repeat itself with strange exactitude. Emile Zola's youthful struggles have been recently made known to the world in the *Journal des Goncourt*. The renowned author of *L'Assommoir* was so poor in his early days that he was frequently forced to pawn his coat and sit at home in his shirt-sleeves. He lived in a Parisian garret on the seventh floor, in regular Grub Street fashion, whence he looked over a vast area of house-roofs, and dreamed of the day when his name

would be a household word in all those dwellings. Although so wretchedly impecunious, Zola was quite happy, for he was busied in writing a vast epic poem called *Genesis, Humanity, and the Future*. In that garret he thought himself fortunate if he could afford twopence for a candle to light him through his midnight work. In the *Goncourt Journal*, Alphonse Daudet is mentioned as having been expelled from his lodgings, when only seventeen years old, for not paying his rent. It was a cold night; and the future author of *Tartarin* was compelled to wander about Paris, until he found a friend, near the Fountain of the Luxembourg, who took him home, and put him in his own bed. Daudet has asserted that the feeling of being in that warm bed was the greatest luxury he had ever known.

When Tom Moore, fresh from the cloisters of Trinity, turned up in London with the MS. of his translation of *Anacreon*, which he had set his heart on publishing by hook or by crook, he took up his abode in George Street, Portman Square, in a top room that cost him six shillings a week; and here the author of *Lalla Rookh* pored over the relics of the Scian bard night and day. Who has not heard of the sound-proof room in Cheyne Row which Carlyle contrived for himself in the attic? It was lighted from the top, where no sight or noise from outside could penetrate. 'My conscience!' cried a friend, addressing the Sage of Chelsea with unconscious sarcasm, 'here ye may study and write all the rest of your life, and no human being be one bit the wiser.' The literary 'parlour next the sky,' one may safely assume, has never before been so vividly described as in *Sartor Resartus*. 'It was the attic floor of the highest house in the Wahngasse, and might truly be called the pinnacle of Weissnichtwo, for it rose sheer up above the contiguous roofs, themselves rising from elevated ground. . . . It was the speculum or watch-tower of Teufelsdröckh; wherfrom, sitting at ease, he might see the whole life-circulation of that considerable city. . . . It was a true sublimity to dwell there. . . . That stifled hum of Midnight, when Traffic has lain down to rest, and the chariot-wheels of Vanity, still rolling here and there through distant streets, are bearing her to Halls roofed in, and lighted to the due pitch for her; and only Vice and Misery, to prowl or to moan like night-birds, are abroad: that hum, I say, like the stertorous, unquiet slumber of sick Life, is heard in Heaven!'

Even Robert Bloomfield began his literary career in garrets—first in Fisher's Court, and afterwards in Blue Hart Court, both near Coleman Street in the City of London. Under most trying circumstances, in the midst of the noise and bustle of workmen in the same house, he composed his famous poem, *The Farmer's Boy*, the latter part of his *Autumn*, and the whole of his *Winter*. But the most pathetic romance of literary life in a garret was that of the boy Chat-

terton beyond a doubt. Even De Quincey, who for two months in London—as related in his *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*—seldom slept under a roof, has failed to awaken our sympathy in a like degree. For the first seven weeks of his life in London, according to a plasterer who shared his lodging, Chatterton hardly ever slept. He wrote with a sort of fury all through the night. In the month of June, in the same year—1770—he changed his residence to another garret. This was the famous landmark in Brook Street, the first house from Holborn on the left-hand side—No. 39. From here he contributed to the *London Magazine*, among other journals. Withdrawing one night to this garret, hungry and in despair, he died from the effects of arsenic. He was found at daybreak—when the attic door was broken open—the contents of a nearly empty phial still in his hand. When Goldsmith first found literary employment he took a lodging in Green Arbour Court, in the Old Bailey—a miserable room, with but one chair. He did not quit this squalid abode for over three years. Improved circumstances enabled him to move to the famous house in Wine Office Court—to the memorable room in which Dr Johnson 'discovered' the immortal *Vicar of Wakefield*. Johnson's sympathy with Goldsmith was no doubt quickened by the recollection of his own humble lodgings in Exeter Street, Strand, when, as he has declared, he 'dined for eightpence at the "Pine Apple" in New Street, fast by.'

In the face of so many remarkable examples, it would seem evident that a garret has proved a salutary abode, a monastic workshop, in which a severe apprenticeship to fame may be served to the best advantage. 'In this room fame was won!' cries Hawthorne, referring to his garret at Salem. But even those who have possessed the full courage of conviction and have sternly faced adversity, labouring persistently in spite of every repulse, have sometimes failed to attain success; and all this goes clearly to show that a man having the genius of a Shakespeare can seldom, if ever, rise to eminence without sacrifice and fearless toil.

INSPIRATION.

It is not in the solitary place,
Where breezes blow across untrodden sward
And shy wild-birds frequent the open space,
That best is heard the message of the Lord.
Nor yet upon the weed-strewn, rocky shore,
Where waves toss up their flying clouds of spray,
And high above the mighty ocean's roar
Shrills out the whistling wind unceasingly.
The dreamful quiet lulls the mind to rest,
The winds and waves chase other thoughts away,
And Inspiration's voice is heard the best
When sounding through the duty of the day;
For well-accustomed duties leave the mind
At leisure, calm, receptive, unconfin'd.

ANITA STUART.